

DUXBURY REPORTER September 25, 2009

Making a push with their pens

p.1 ✓

Petition drive in support of police chief underway

By Matthew Nadler
MNADLER@CNC.COM

What sort of effect it will ultimately have is unknown, but a petition drive is underway in an effort to convince Town Manager Richard MacDonald to reverse his decision not to renew Police Chief Mark DeLuca's contract.

Volunteers have been collecting signatures at various locations in town, as well as online.

The online petition states "Keeping Chief DeLuca is in the best interest of all of our residents, including our children, senior citizens, business owners, employees, visitors, and families."

Among those signing the online petition was Debra Jewell who added the comment that: "Chief DeLuca has been an excellent police chief for our town and is an outstanding human being. It has been a privilege to know him and work with him."

According to John Canty, one of those involved in the petition drive, said the

campaign didn't start from one person, but stemmed from what he called a "groundswell of support."

"There's a strong undercurrent of support for the chief" said Canty. "He understands what the community needs, what the officers need."

Canty said the petitioners plan to make a presentation at the next selectmen's meeting, currently scheduled for this Monday. As of Wednesday, roughly 500 people had already signed the petition. "Those are voices that should be listened to," said Canty.

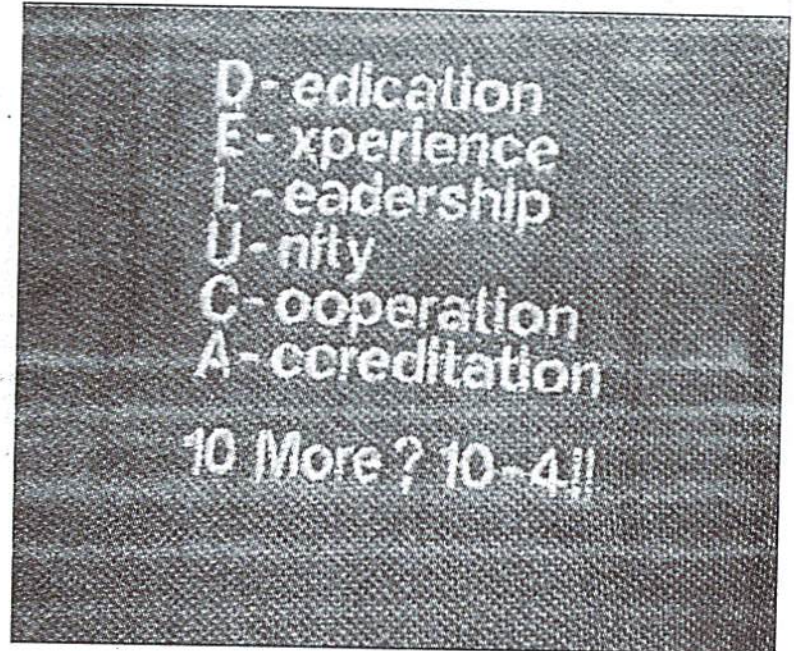
Signatures have so far been collected at the transfer station and Foodie's. Canty said he hoped the group would have 2,000 signatures to present to selectmen. "That would be a significant segment of the population."

They may also be at youth sports events over the weekend, said Canty.

While he can't predict how

SEE PUSH, PAGE 3

+



SUPPORTERS OF POLICE CHIEF MARK DELUCA HAVE THEIR OWN POLO SHIRTS.

COURTESY STEVE MASTRANGELO

Group plans to take petition to selectmen p. 3

FROM PUSH, PAGE 1

MacDonald would respond to the petition, said Canty, "The only way we're going to turn him is to get a groundswell."

"People are saying 'you're not the town, you were hired to run the town,'" he added.

One town leader sympathetic to the campaign is selectman

Chris Donato, who commented that MacDonald has never explained his reason for not retaining the chief.

Duxbury, said Donato, tends to have a vocal minority. He noted that his own election stemmed from the participation of people who don't normally get

involved in town affairs.

The effort to keep DeLuca is an effort to get these people to voice their opinion, so that selectmen and the town manager hear their point of view.

However, Donato noted, the petition can't force MacDonald to change his decision.

"Will it work? I don't know."

"As a resident, I've been very pleased with the police chief," said Donato.

Both MacDonald and DeLuca declined to comment for the article, but Canty said the chief "was grateful for the support," and "feels appreciated."